# WACC Red Black Logo JPG

# Request for Letter of Interest

(Issued by Washington Campus Compact to all community and technical colleges in Washington State)

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ith funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the *Connect2Complete* (C2C) pilot project aims to address the critical needs of low-income community college students enrolled in developmental education courses who experience significant barriers to obtaining postsecondary credentials. By connecting these students with peer advocates, the project seeks to increase student persistence and completion. Campus Compact will fund nine campuses in three states to implement the project. Selected campuses will receive up to $175,000 over two academic years.

# The C2C Vision

Campus Compact seeks to build evidence of success through implementation of the C2C pilot project, proving that colleges that utilize peer-to-peer advocacy and that build student social capital, leadership development, and community engagement, can positively impact retention and persistence. Mobilizing successful students in support of students who face obstacles to completion has the potential to influence community college practice and result in significant increases towards persistence and retention. We believe that the values of academic success, community/campus connections, and social justice can be transformative for C2C students, peer advocates, and the community college as a whole.

Community colleges selected for C2C will commit to developing and testing the C2C model. Campus Compact, together with the pilot sites, will use data and evidence from the pilot project to support the identification of the essential elements necessary to codify a peer-to-peer model. For growing the model on the pilot campuses and for widespread adoption and lasting impact beyond the pilot phase, state Campus Compacts will work in partnership with national Campus Compact to identify a financing model for C2C, with an emphasis on leveraging and repurposing existing revenue streams such as work-study. This short-term pilot project has the potential to catalyze long-term systemic change for community colleges.

# Eligibility

1. States eligible to apply include Florida, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, and Washington. The Maricopa Community College District in Arizona is also eligible to apply. State Campus Compacts are to apply in partnership with three community colleges in the state. Community colleges will be selected at the discretion of each state Campus Compact.
2. Community college applicants must be Campus Compact member institutions in good standing prior to applying for the grant and must commit to full participation in the C2C pilot project.

# Process for Colleges in Washington State to Apply

Step 1: Submit a Title Page, Letter of Interest, Supplemental Questions, and Vitae of Program Director to Washington Campus Compact by **Friday, September 23, 2011.**

Step 2: The three finalists will then collaborate with Washington Campus Compact and the other finalists to complete their full proposals (see full RFP). These will need to be completed and submitted to Washington Campus Compact by **Monday, October 10, 2011**.

Step 3: Washington Campus Compact will submit the full proposals collectively to the national Campus Compact office by **October 12, 2011**.

# Information about Washington Campus Compact’s Program Design

Washington Campus Compact will lead the grant writing process once the finalists are selected. We will work collaboratively with the finalists to develop a cohesive program for our state. Our goal is to have a program in which each of the college’s projects will have a common program design and activities so as to strengthen the likelihood of replicability and sustainability of the program in Washington. The three selected finalists and Washington Campus Compact will collaboratively determine the common elements to be incorporated into each of the college’s proposals, but will likely include the following:

1. Each finalist will be required to coach one other campus during each program year and subgrant a portion of their grant to those campuses to help them develop their programs.
2. Each finalist will be required to host a half-day workshop twice a year on their campus for 3-5 other colleges (including the campus that they are coaching) and stakeholders (elected officials, other funding organizations, Board of Trustees, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, etc.) to showcase their program and facilitate a discussion on best practices for persistence and completion using a peer advocacy model. The college will be required to help pay for travel expenses of guest campuses, if needed.
3. Representatives from each college will collectively submit a proposal to present at the annual Continuums of Service conference and other professional venues.
4. The presidents from the participating colleges will be required to present their programs and impacts to their presidential colleagues at least once a year during their monthly statewide meetings.
5. The presidents from participating colleges will be required to present their programs to their Board of Trustees each year.
6. At least twice per year, the presidents from participating colleges agree to introduce cohorts of peer advocates and C2C participants to state legislators working on education issues. The students will educate policymakers on the merits of peer-advocacy programs that improve persistence and completion and share their personal success stories.
7. All colleges will collaborate on creating a credit-bearing service-learning course with common curriculum to use to prepare and support the peer advocates.
8. All colleges will collaborate to create a common job description for the peer advocates.
9. All colleges will designate a specific percent of their work study positions to work as peer advocates.
10. All colleges will create and support student-led learning communities for all peer advocates and C2C participants.
11. All colleges will collaborate to coordinate a statewide student-led leadership conference open to all community college students.
12. All colleges will utilize Washington Campus Compact’s Retention Project to support their program.
13. Student advocates will be enrolled in the Students in Service program (if eligible) and participate in a credit-bearing course in an effort to better prepare and support them to be effective advocates.
14. All colleges will support the peer advocates and C2C participants to develop and engage in service projects focused on college access and success.
15. All colleges will collaborate with Washington Campus Compact and the other community colleges to continue to strengthen their programs and build a strong statewide learning network.
16. All colleges will collaborate to develop a statewide sustainability plan to leverage/re-purpose existing resources as well as cultivate other resources to sustain the program beyond the grant period.

# Directions for Submitting a Letter of Interest (Step 1)

1. Review the full RFP (attached) to better understand the intent of the grant and what will be required of your campus if selected as a finalist.
2. Join the informational conference call Monday, September 19, 2011 from 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm
3. Write a Letter of Interest and include the information listed below.
4. Complete the Supplementary Questions and include your responses (on separate pages) with your Letter of Interest.
5. Submit the a) Title Page, b) Letter of Interest, c) Supplementary Questions, and d) Vitae of Program Director to Washington Campus Compact by Friday, September 23, 2011

# Letter of Interest

*Please include the following information in your Letter of Interest (do not exceed 2 pages total, 1.15-1.5 spacing, 12 point font):*

1. What are the college’s mission/goals and current or past activities related to strengthening developmental education and/or college completion efforts?
2. What experience does the college have with creating student opportunities for peer-mentoring, peer-advocacy, orientation, leadership, community engagement, and student voice?
3. Describe the college’s leadership and collaboration efforts between different departments.
4. What unique characteristics, programs, resources, or activities of your college make it particularly well suited to implement this program (social media/technology, curricula, data collection, etc.)?
5. Describe your overall support to collaborate with other colleges and Washington Campus Compact to develop, implement and sustain a successful peer advocacy program.

# Supplementary Questions

*On separate pages, please answer the following questions (do not exceed four pages total, 1.15-1.5 spacing, 12 point font):*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. | How many Pell grant-eligible students are at your college? |  |
| 2. | How many work study-eligible students are at your college? |  |
| 3. | What percent (or number) of work study students would you be willing to dedicate to this program? |  |
| 4. | How many students are enrolled in at least one developmental education course? |  |
| 5. | On average, what is your projected number of C2C students that you would serve per quarter? |  |
| 6. | On average, what is your projected number of peer-advocates you would recruit per quarter? |  |
| 7. | What are the completion rates of students at your college? |  |

1. Describe the demographics of the college’s high-risk students for non-completion.
2. Describe the demographics of your community.
3. Will you be able to work collaboratively with the other finalists and Washington Campus Compact to complete the full Request for Proposal by Monday, October 10th? (This is a very fast turnaround time so you need to be sure that you have the staff in place to write a quality proposal in a short amount of time. Be sure to review the Request for Proposal before answering this question. We may try to meet face-to-face to collaborate more effectively as well.)
4. Do you currently have a peer advocacy or mentoring program working on persistence and completion? If yes, briefly describe. If no, but have plans to develop one, briefly describe.
5. Do you currently have a data collection system to track student persistence and completion? If yes, briefly describe.
6. Do you have curriculum focused on leadership, learning communities, civic engagement, mentoring/advocacy, etc. that might be used to support the C2C program? If yes, briefly describe.
7. Do you have anything currently in place for incentivizing peer-mentoring/advocacy efforts? If yes, briefly describe.
8. Do you have any other funding from Gates to support student success? If yes, briefly describe.
9. Do you have the Retention Project (through Washington Campus Compact) on your campus? If yes, briefly describe your campus’ project.
10. Do you have the Students in Service program (through Washington Campus Compact) on your campus? If yes, briefly describe the project.
11. Are you willing to provide leadership to other colleges in the state to cultivate a statewide learning network to strengthen persistence and completion using a peer advocacy/mentoring model? If yes, briefly describe your commitment/previous experience in this area.
12. Do you agree to incorporate the common elements for all Washington proposals into your proposal? (As the colleges collaborate on the proposal, they may identify additional common elements too.)
13. Are you committed to developing the C2C model and sharing that model with other campuses and stakeholders in Washington?
14. Who will serve as the program director? Briefly describe his/her experience and leadership in the area of persistence and completion.
15. Is the program director able to attend the sub-grantee meeting November 9-10, 2011 (location to be determined)?

# Vitae of Person to Oversee Program

*Please submit the vitae of the anticipated program director with the Title Page, Letter of Interest, and answers to Supplemental Questions.*

# Criteria for Selecting Washington Colleges

1. Letter of Interest demonstrates strong institutional support, capacity, and willingness to play a leadership role in Washington. (35%)
2. Supplemental Questions demonstrate that the campus has the need, capacity, and commitment to be successful with the C2C program. (50%)
3. Program Director has the credentials and experience to develop, implement, and sustain the C2C program on his/her campus and collaborate throughout the state. (15%)

# Non-Finalists

If you are not selected as one of the three finalists, there will be other services for you. Each of the finalists will be required to sub-grant to one other campus each year and provide coaching and support for their peer-advocacy program. Sub-grantees will be selected on the merits of the Letter of Interest packets submitted. One of the goals of this program is to develop a statewide learning community for those colleges interested in strengthening their persistence and completion efforts using a peer advocacy/mentoring model. Each participating college will host workshops twice a year and your campus may be invited to send a team to learn more about the peer-advocacy model. Your travel expenses may be covered, if needed. Washington Campus Compact, in partnership with interested colleges, will continue to pursue additional funding to support these efforts. We strongly encourage all colleges, regardless of whether or not they have a peer-advocacy program at this time, to submit a Letter of Interest packet so that we can better gauge the level of interest among all colleges in using a peer-advocacy model to strengthen persistence and completion efforts.

# Timeline

September 12, 2011 Request for Proposals distributed to State Compacts

September 14, 2011 Request for Letter of Interest distributed to community and technical colleges in Washington

September 19, 2011 Optional information conference call for interested Washington colleges (See details below.)

September 23, 2011 Letter of Interest packets due to Washington Campus Compact

September 27, 2011 Washington college finalists selected

Sept 27-Oct 10, 2011 Finalists and Washington Campus Compact collaborate on writing full proposals and developing budgets

October 10, 2011 Final proposals due to Washington Campus Compact

October 12, 2011 Completed proposals due to National Campus Compact at 5 pm EST

October 24, 2011 Sub-grantees notified of awards

November 9 - 10, 2011 Sub-grantee meeting

January 2012 Sub-grant begins

December 2013 Community college sub-grant ends

# Optional - Join the Information Conference Call

Day/Date: Monday, September 19, 2011

Time: 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Call In #: **866-414-2828** (toll-free)

Accesscode: **350086#**

# BY SEPTEMBER 23, 2011, Submit:

* 1. Title Page
  2. Letter of Interest
  3. Answers to Supplemental Questions (on a separate page)
  4. Vitae of Program Director

For information about the program design or application process, contact Jennifer Hine at [jenniferhine@wwu.edu](mailto:jenniferhine@wwu.edu) or 360/650-7984.

# Submit Electronically To:

[debbie.curry@wwu.edu](mailto:debbie.curry@wwu.edu)

For assistance with the electronic submission process, contact Debbie Curry at [debbie.curry@wwu.edu](mailto:debbie.curry@wwu.edu) or 360/650-7312.

# Title Page

# Institution \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Program Director

This person will be the point person within the community college responsible for communications and coordination with Washington Campus Compact.

Name:

Title:

Role with C2C:

Mailing address:

Phone:

Fax:

Email:

# President

Name:

Title: President

Role with C2C:

Mailing address:

Phone:

Fax:

Email:

C2C Other Program Personnel   
Name:

Title:

Role with C2C:

Mailing address:

Phone:

Fax:

Email:

I certify that the contents of the Letter of Interest packet are true to the best of my knowledge, and that if chosen, the community college intends to participate fully in the C2C program.

Signature of Program Director:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of President:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_